

What is claimed is:

1. A method for creating and managing a shared workspace in a network environment comprising the steps of:
5 creating a shared workspace accessible to participants of a scheduled meeting;
categorizing data stored in said shared workspace; and
exposing said categorized data stored in said shared workspace to each participant of said scheduled meeting accessing said shared workspace through a
10 graphical user interface, said graphical user interface enabling each participant to input data into appropriate categories of said shared workspace and edit categorized data exposed through said graphical user interface.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein data stored in said shared workspace is
15 categorized into two or more of agenda, goals, decisions, tasks, file attachments, whiteboard notes and drawing categories.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein said categorized data stored in said shared workspace can be exposed to multiple participants simultaneously.
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4. The method of claim 3 wherein said categorized data stored in said shared workspace can be edited by multiple participants simultaneously.
5. The method of claim 4 wherein changes to categorized data stored in
25 said shared workspace made by participants are applied to said categorized data using an optimistic editing model.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein said shared workspace is created automatically when a new meeting is scheduled.
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7. The method of claim 6 further comprising the step of sending a link to the created shared workspace to each participant of the scheduled meeting.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the link is attached to a scheduled meeting request delivered to each participant of the meeting.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein said shared workspace is created for a new meeting in response to user input.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of sending a link to the created shared workspace to each participant of the meeting.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the link is attached to a scheduled meeting request delivered to each participant of the meeting.

12. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of restricting access to the categorized data stored in said shared workspace to participants of the scheduled meeting based on network login information.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein said network login information includes user login identifications.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein during creation of said shared workspace, the user login identifications of participants of said scheduled meeting are stored with said shared workspace, during access to said shared workspace by a user, the login identification of said user being compared with the login identifications stored with said shared workspace.

15. A method for creating a secure shared meeting workspace associated with a scheduled meeting in a network environment, said method comprising the steps of:

determining the participants in the scheduled meeting;

creating a workspace for the scheduled meeting; and

restricting access to the workspace to those participants in the scheduled meeting based on network login information associated with said participants.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein said network login information includes user login identifications.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein during creation of said shared workspace, the user login identifications of participants of said scheduled meeting are stored with said shared workspace, during access to said shared workspace by a user, the login identification of said user being compared with the login identifications stored with said shared workspace.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein said network login information is retrieved from an address book stored by an email and scheduling application.

19. A method of restricting access to a secure shared meeting workspace associated with a scheduled meeting entered into an email and scheduling application in a network environment to participants of the scheduled meeting, said method comprising the steps of:

during a request for access to said workspace, comparing network login information associated with the user making said request, with network login information associated with the participants in the scheduled meeting; and

permitting access to said workspace when the user network login information corresponds with the participant login information.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein the user login information is obtained by making a series of Windows API calls.

21. A system for creating and managing a secure shared workspace for a scheduled meeting comprising:

a workspace server executing a server shared workspace application for creating and managing a shared workspace associated with a scheduled meeting, data stored in said shared workspace being categorized and being accessible only to participants of said scheduled meeting;

an email server executing a server email and scheduling application; and

a plurality of workstations, each of said workstations executing a client email and scheduling application and a client shared workspace application, said client shared workspace application including a graphical user interface to enable each participant of said scheduled meeting to access and edit categorized data stored in said shared workspace.

22. A system according to claim 21 wherein data stored in said shared workspace is categorized into two or more of agenda, goals, decisions, tasks, file attachments, whiteboard notes and drawing categories.

23. A system according to claim 22 wherein the client shared workspace application communicates with the client email and scheduling application executed by each workstation, said client shared workspace application intercepting meeting requests generated by said client email and scheduling application to determine whether a shared workspace is to be created for a new meeting being scheduled or whether a shared workspace existing for a scheduled meeting is to be updated.

24. A system according to claim 23 wherein said client shared workspace application instructs the server shared workspace application to create a shared workspace for a new meeting being scheduled automatically.

25. A system according to claim 23 wherein said client shared workspace application asks the user scheduling the new meeting whether a shared workspace for the new meeting is to be created and instructs the server shared workspace application to create a shared workspace for the new meeting when specified by said user.

26. A system according to claim 23 wherein the client shared workspace application attaches a link to the shared workspace to the meeting request generated by the client email and scheduling application before the meeting request is sent to the server email and scheduling application.

27. A system according to claim 23 wherein said client and server shared workspace applications permit multiple participants to access and edit data stored in said shared workspace.

28. A system according to claim 27 wherein changes to data stored in said shared workspace are applied using an optimistic editing model.

5 29. A system according to claim 21 wherein said server shared workspace application restricts access to said shared workspace based on user network login information.

Patent for Sale